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Vietnam Ambush: In War and Politics

CPYRGHT

WASHINGTON — Political, as well as military ambushes, dominated the topsy-turvy crisis in South Vietnam last week.

In Da Nang, South Vietnam's second largest city, the U.S. enlisted men's barracks was attacked by more than 1000 howling youths as anti-government demonstrations took on an increasingly anti-American tone.

A grenade exploded at the height of the riot, seriously injuring three demonstrators. There were no American casualties. Another blast killed a maid working in the barracks while U.S. troops fired shots into the air to scare off the demonstrators.

Youthful mobs in Saigon also sacked and burned buildings in the worst outbreak of rioting since last summer. However, several hundred students supporting the government smashed the Student Union building in a counter demonstration.

WHILE AMERICANS were placed in the unenviable position of having to fight their friends to protect them from their enemies, an official of the Central Intelligence Agency called for a negotiated settlement of hostilities in South Vietnam.

Voicing "serious" doubt that victory can be won in South Vietnam, the CIA officer, Willard Matthias, said that with continued U.S. aid "at least a prolonged stalemate can be attained."

ADMINISTRATIVE sources made his study available to news-

men, but emphasized that the findings do not represent the U.S. Government view.

A special assistant for Vietnamese affairs in the State Department said the United States is in Vietnam because it was asked and because it must keep its commitments to freedom in Southeast Asia.

Michael V. Forrestal, a State Department specialist, told top leaders of the Veterans of Foreign Wars at a military briefing: "This is the final reason why the struggle for Vietnam must be of such concern to us."

Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, after his first month as U.S. Ambassador to South Vietnam, warned that further measures would be necessary to cut off Communist North Vietnam's support for the Vietcong insurgents.

"Only time will tell," he declared, whether the Reds can be crushed as long as the North Vietnamese supply base remains available to the Vietcong.

ON THE MILITARY SIDE, a battalion of South Vietnamese that had walked into a Vietcong ambush had "theoretically" cleared the paddy-land area of guerrillas "a few hours before," military sources later reported.

In the "cleared area ambush," 60 government troops were killed, 65 wounded and 135 were listed as missing. Four American advisers accompanying the Vietnamese were also killed.